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## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, March 13, 2015, at 11 a.m.

## Senate

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2015

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, most high, thank You for being light in our darkness, food for our hunger, peace for our pressures, joy for our sorrow, forgiveness for our failures, strength for our weakness, guidance for our confusion, and health for our sickness.

May our Senators labor today with the knowledge that You are everything they need. When they feel uncertain about the next step to take, supply their needs from Your bountiful riches. Lord, keep them from stumbling or slipping as they strive to live lives that honor You. May they ever do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

### HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act is one of the most bipartisan pieces of legislation one could possibly imagine. Ever since this bipartisan human rights bill was introduced by a Democrat and a Republican in January and made publicly available for any person to read, Members of both parties have sung its praises repeatedly. This bipartisan bill has gained the support of 13 Democratic cosponsors.

Recently, Democrats voted unanimously to approve it in committee. This week Democrats consented unanimously to advance it on the floor. Even the Democratic leader himself said he “underscore[d], appreciate[d], and agree[d]” with my call to pass this bipartisan legislation overwhelmingly. “I doubt there will be problems on my side,” he said. “If there are, I will work to clear them.”

That was Monday.

By Tuesday, Democrats seemed to be threatening to filibuster human rights legislation for abused and neglected victims and children. Let me repeat that. Democrats are now threatening to filibuster human rights legislation for abused and neglected victims and children. So why?

Democrats now say they don’t like language that has been in the bill since it was introduced months ago that does nothing more than reaffirm the bipartisan law of the land. That is all that language does. This bipartisan provision was on page 4 of this modest-sized bill, so Democrats obviously knew it was there to begin with. Democrats ob-

viously wouldn’t have cosponsored the bill or voted for it in committee or called for passage on the floor if they hadn’t read the bill first.

These Democrats surely don’t want to see more quotes such as this one from an official with the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women. She said: “Senate Democrats are choosing a phantom problem over real victims.”

So if these Democrats keep their word to the victims of human trafficking, then a partisan filibuster attempt will fail overwhelmingly. If these Democrats keep their word to the vulnerable and the oppressed, then the Senate will pass a bipartisan human rights bill.

But if these Democrats truly are having second thoughts about supporting such important human rights legislation, they are free to offer an amendment. But let’s not filibuster bipartisan help for vulnerable victims just to make a point for leftwing special interest groups.

Our Democratic friends have to resist the siren song of their pollsters who tell them that the path to victory lies in turning bipartisan bills into manufactured fights over cultural issues. Americans are looking for statesmen and stateswomen on the Democratic side to stand up—stand up—and help us emancipate the victims of modern slavery, not score another empty political point.

So I am calling on these Democrats to help us do that. Help is almost there for the vulnerable victims of these awful crimes. Surely no leftwing special interest group is more important than fighting modern-day slavery. So

● This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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